

# Data for Action: How Can You Use the ADDM Network Findings?

There are many children and families living with ASD across the United States. The ADDM Network's information on the number and characteristics of children with ASD provides data for action. These findings can be used in local communities and nationwide to move forward initiatives, policies, and research that help children with ASD.

## The federal government is using this information to

- ❑ Measure progress toward goals.
  - ADDM Network findings are used to measure progress toward the [Healthy People 2020 goals](#) of increasing the proportion of children with ASD with a first evaluation by 36 months of age and enrolled in special services by 48 months of age (36).
- ❑ Guide our research and the research of other scientists across the country.
  - ADDM Network findings have helped inform the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee's [Strategic Plan](#) for ASD research (37).
- ❑ Promote early identification efforts.
  - ADDM Network findings on average age of diagnosis support CDC's "[Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#)" program, which aims to lower the average age of diagnosis by promoting developmental monitoring among parents, childcare providers, and healthcare providers.

## Service providers, such as healthcare organizations and school systems, can use this information to

- ❑ Promote early identification efforts in order to lower the age when children are first evaluated for developmental concerns, diagnosed with ASD, and enrolled in community-based support systems.
- ❑ Improve recognition and documentation of symptoms of ASD.
- ❑ Plan and coordinate service delivery.
- ❑ Target outreach to under-identified groups of children, such as black and Hispanic children.

## Policymakers and community leaders can use this information to

- ❑ Promote awareness of ASD and bring the community together to address the growing needs of families living with ASD.
- ❑ Develop policies and promote early identification and equity in access to services and supports so that all children get the help they need.
- ❑ Serve as the basis for the creation of a task force or commission, focused on the coordination of ASD activities in local communities.

## Researchers can use this information to

- ❑ Document the need for accelerated ASD research.
- ❑ Guide future research projects.
- ❑ Examine more closely why and how ASD affects children differently by sex, race/ethnicity, intellectual ability, and community.
- ❑ Support the creation of ASD community research consortia in local communities.
- ❑ Develop standard tools for measuring and documenting severity and functioning among children with ASD.

